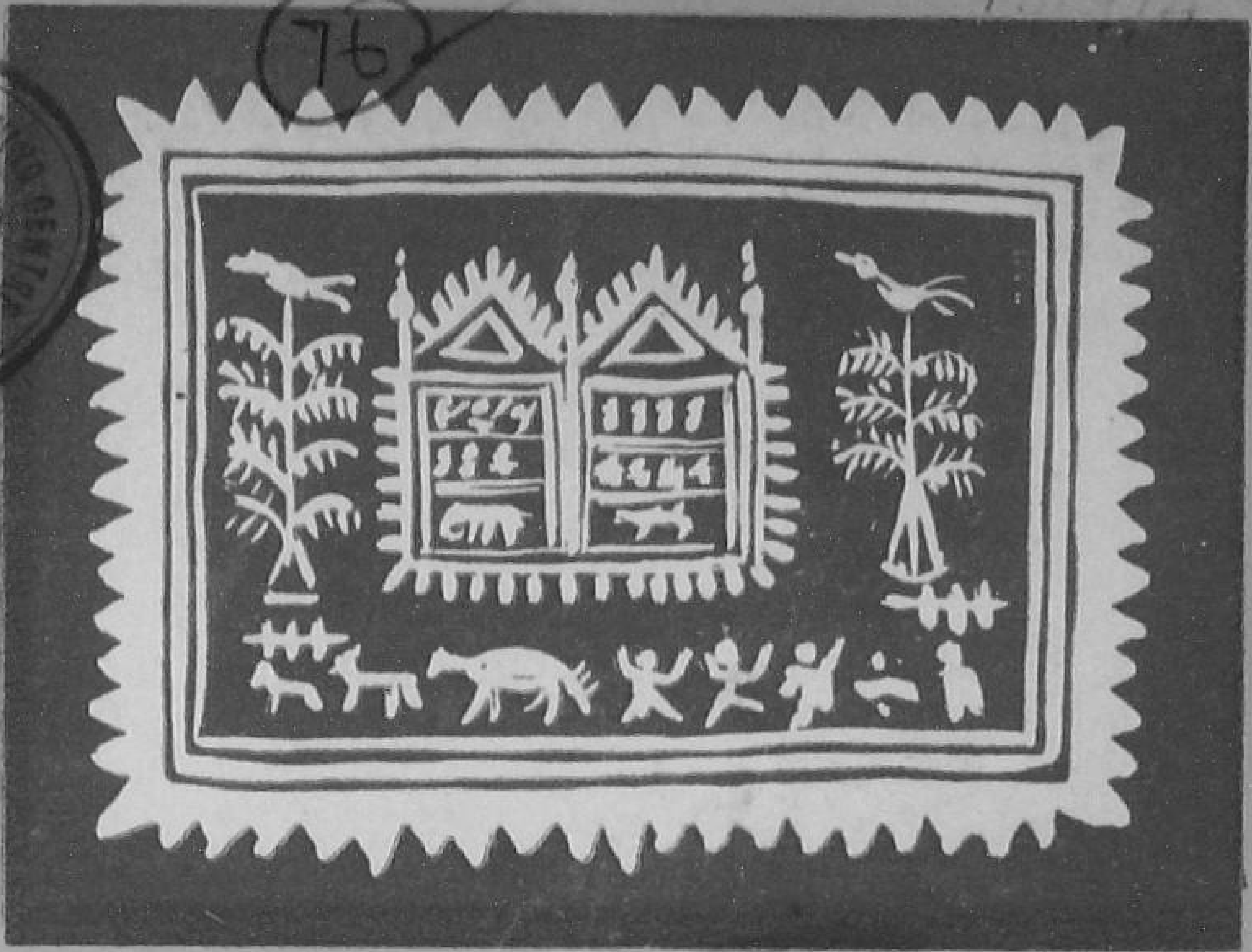
OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL, RURAL EXTENSION TRAINING CENTRE
20 MAY 1959
ADUTHURAI

SEMINAR



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# ARTS AND AESTHETICS

MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
NEW DELHI
1958.

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL, RURAL EXTENSION ...
20 MAY 19..
ADUTHURAI

# SEMINAR ON ARTS AND AESTHETICS

## CONTENTS

| | PAGE |
|---|---|
| Foreword | i |
| Introduction | 1 |
| Brief Summary of Prof. Humayun Kabir's inaugural address | 3 |
| 'Art in Rural Life' *by Shri S.S. Dutta* | 5 |
| 'Art Education for Children' *by Shri A.N. Sehgal* | 8 |
| 'Alpona and Rangoli' *by Shri Ramesh Chandra* | 11 |
| 'Art in Social Education' *by Shri A.N. Sehgal* | 12 |
| Discussion and Decisions | 16 |
| Talk *by Sardar Sohan Singh* | 19 |
| Talk *by Shri A.R. Deshpande* | 20 |
| 'Cultural Centre for village surroundings' *by Shri A.N. Sehgal* | 23 |
| 'Arts and Crafts amongst Bhils (Rajasthan)' *by Smt. Sujata Mitra* | 24 |
| 'Mobile Stage' *by Shri Satyendra Nath* | 29 |
| 'Ghumar and Panihari of Rajasthan' *by Shri Satyendra Nath* | 31 |
| 'Role of Arts and Crafts in Community Development' *by Smt. Sujata Mitra* | 32 |
| Discussion | 37 |
| Proceedings of Syllabus Committee | 41 |
| List of participants | 45 |

# FOREWORD

ART Consultant Sehgal is a difficult artist to deal with. Artists have been used to struggling by themselves and withering away alone in the absence of nourishment. Sehgal apparently is built of a different metal. Besides being an artist of calibre, he is also a man who would not rest content until he gets his right of way. For six years he has struggled almost single-handed in this prosaic atmosphere of Delhi to establish the fact that Community Development cannot thrive permanently unless its foundation is built on art and culture indigenous to the soil for which the programme is meant. If I have been forced to write this foreword despite my lack of qualifications for it, it is because he would not leave me alone without it.

The pages that follow in this booklet represent the first organised effort to do some basic thinking on the question of art and culture in our programme. It was high time this was done, for we as a people are beginning to forget that no progress in India in any field was ever recorded except through the impulse of art, song and poetry. Despite centuries of neglect, nay more, of exploitation, it is the villages of India that still persist as the repository of the art and culture which we claim as our national heritage. If the towns and cities in India have grown into noisy centres of demonstrations, strikes and lockouts and of co-exploitation, it is primarily because the towns and cities as we see today are not an organic growth. They have been impositions, enforcing their right of survival at the expense of the inarticulate masses in the countryside who continue to struggle for a mere existence. Towns and cities have come to stay, so also should our villages. If this is to be, a new reciprocity between the two is a high priority.

From the economic angle, various measures are already being forged through our successive plans and especially through the Community Development programme to establish that reciprocity with a view to the ultimate equilibrium. Regardless of all we may do economically or socially, our efforts will not go far, unless we can restore art, song and poetry in work as used to characterise our villages through the ages. People are considered wise and

vital if they can seize their miseries and transform them into blessings. Our poverty in the villages has yet not destroyed the native art and culture, the song, drama and music in which the native village people still continue to revel. The appeal to the purse is the poorest of appeal to native India. But appeal through art and music is something totally different. We must understand and recognise this peculiar trait of our people and try accordingly to mould our entire outlook for future growth.

Art, drama and music will be there in the countryside in their abundance aching to be picked and promoted with a tender care. Imported urban sophistication has not yet travelled far into the countryside and assuredly has yet not touched our children. It is but fitting therefore that we should begin the spread of this new wave of art, culture and music with the growing children at home and in schools and our native women folks who still remain themselves. May this publication be the forerunner of the tidal wave that we are out to unleash if we are to travel to the destination for which we sailed six packed years back.

New Delhi,
September 20, 1958.

# INTRODUCTION

FOLK Arts have been neglected for a long time. Even after the liberation of our country from the foreign rule, we have not been able to lay an adequate emphasis on this field of activity.

People in rural India have natural leanings towards the Arts which find expression in poetry, music, dance, drama, painting, sculpture, colourful decorative designs, pottery, toys, etc. etc. In our attempts to revitalise rural India, we have to take care not only of material aspects but also the artistic and the cultural. Our planning has, therefore, to be so designed as to give due importance to the claims of the body as well as the spirit. We have made many demands on our resources. On the surface, the claims for the material advancement do appear more important, and deserve priority. If, however, our object is the regeneration of our people, we must not neglect any of the drives that impel human action. Our ancients recognised this clearly. Greatest amongst those who saw the needs for Arts and Aesthetics keeping pace with the material advancement was Asoka, under whose emblem the business of our Government is conducted.

The Ministry of Community Development has made some experiments through the understanding and support of the Minister, Shri S.K. Dey. It has established Art Wings at the various Training Centres to impart training and guidance to the workers in this field of activity. It is true that the professional artists in the urban areas have been helped and sponsored, but our equally creative brethren residing in rural India also need support and recognition. With the formation of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, we now feel that they will 'live' and not 'pass away' unheard and unsung. This Seminar, the first of its kind, was organised to create consciousness amongst our workers on the role and the value of this subject in community development work. We assembled in the village environments of Saidpur (Nilokheri Block), the gaily decorated village where its inhabitants worked day and night in creating artistic symbols and colourful patterns on the mud walls of their dwellings; the potters

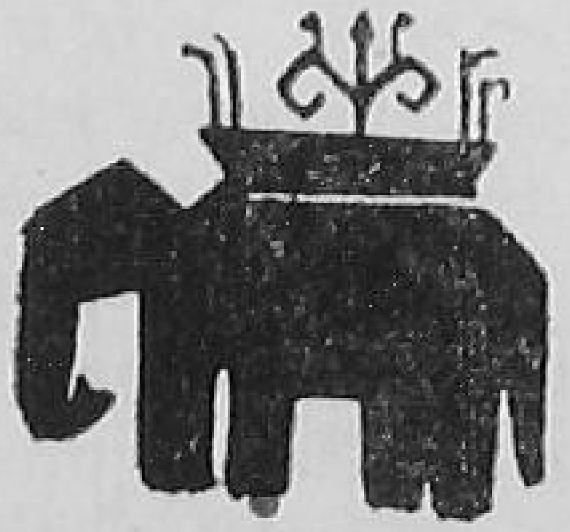
created new shapes, the craftsmen new designs, the school-children dabbled in paintings or moulded toys, musicians and dancers entertained the audiences; thus the artistic urges of the people all around were harnessed in giving a joyful release of their feelings and emotions. The village provided an appropriate setting for such a Seminar.

We feel highly indebted to Prof. Humayun Kabir, Minister for Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs for having inaugurated the Seminar and Shri S.K. Dey, Minister for Community Development for having addressed the Seminar.

We take this opportunity of thanking the Village Panchayat, the Principal. BDO Training Centre, the Director, SEOTC, the Block Development Officer and his staff for their efforts in helping us organise the Seminar. We are also highly grateful to each villager of Saidpur, man or woman who came forth voluntarily and created artistic environments for this occasion.

ART CONSULTANT
Ministry of Community Development
Government of India,
New Delhi.

Krishi Bhavan
Dated 1-9-58.



## Brief Summary of Prof. Humayun Kabir's Inaugural Address

ART plays an important, perhaps an essential role in human life and society. Once the basic requirements of survival have been met, men express themselves in activities that are peculiarly human. Hunger and sex are common to men and animals and intelligence is used by both in the struggle for existence. What distinguishes man from all other animals is this release from the bondage of mere struggle for survival and it is perhaps an even more appropriate description of man to call him an artistic rather than a rational animal.

The Ministry of Community Development aims at revitalising community life by calling out the energies of the people in productive activity of various types. It has paid a great deal of attention to the development of agriculture and various forms of small and middle-sized industries. It has applied itself to the task of bringing education in its various forms to children and adults. It is, therefore, appropriate that it should include in the purview of its activities the encouragement of art in all its forms.

In a country like India, this emphasis on art has a special significance. Most of our economic activities have been given an artistic expression. We have festivals for the cultivation of crops and festivals for the harvest. The seasons have their own special forms of artistic endeavour. Grace and sweetness is brought to everyday life in a thousand ways. Even casual visitors are struck by the beauty of form exhibited in articles of common use. Religious and philosophical truths have been preserved and inculcated mainly through the medium of art.

People from abroad are often surprised by the civilised and educated response of villagers who are often illiterate. The explanation is to be found in the oral tradition of education which has continued in this country throughout the ages. The main meduim of this oral education has been the various forms of art, particularly folk songs, drama, music, story telling and folk dances.

They have brought to the ordinary villager the rich inheritance of past ages and at the same time given him an opportunity of self-expression in creative work. Art is simultaneously universal and unique and the long tradition of art in India has helped the common villager to realise something of this balance in his own life.

Art can, however, never be preserved, it can only be recreated. Continuity in art becomes meaningless if it is mere repetition. On the other hand without continuity, art may degenerate into mere artifice. The programme of community development will render a real service for the regeneration of India, it can help the villagers to combine continuity with creativity, experiment with tradition, modern urge for improvement with ancient values of calm and contentment.

I. Art in Rural Life

II. Art Education for Children

III. Alpona and Rangoli

IV. Art in Social Education

I. S.S. DUTTA*: In our attempt to understand the significance, meaning and content of the symbols as expressed by the rural people in their indigenous art form, we have to understand the importance and nature of various actions, movements and gestures, in our own daily life, which signify certain inner feelings. A gesture of the face, the hand or any other part of the body is simply a transference of a certain feeling, felt within. An upright hand indicates peace. A simple variation of the same gesture with the thumb inside means assurance of protection (as in the dance of Lord Shiva). Other examples are:—

Inward movement of the index finger calling someone in sight.

Index finger pointing outward with the remaining fingers turned inwards — accusing.

A tight fist — war or unity.

Full hand all fingers apart — creativity.

Whole hand in movement — nothingness.

Teeth clenching — anger, a feeling of cannibalism.

Twirling hand — grace.

Upward movement of the mouth — happiness.

Drooping shoulders (in activity) — death, disease.

These gestures and such other external expressions ultimately get the form of visual symbols with a proper study of these feelings such as of anger, contentment, calmness, happiness, sadness, etc. can be better understood. A visual symbol is nothing but a particular mood, phenomenon or atmosphere, which can be felt at a particular time and then can be given a permanent form. The

* Shri S.S. Dutta, is Design Artist at the SEO Training Centre, Nilokheri.

basic quality of visual symbols in art is that it expresses some situation, or idea, with such economy and restraint of lines etc. that it does not lose its basic expressive value and conveys the idea. The language of visual symbols thus does not suffer from a lack of words.

In pure Indian dance form (Bharat Natyam) the same gestures of the hands, the face and the feet, as well as other parts of the body, are utilised to convey an idea. It is the dumb language of dancing. The technical name for these gestures is 'mudras'. Some well-known examples are: Kriya; Dhyana; Abhaya (as in the dance of Shiva; and Ikagrit (concentration, as in Lord Buddha's images of eyes looking at the tip of the nose and so on).

A proper perspective and knowledge of these symbols can be immensely helpful in understanding the moods of Nature, in all its manifestations and of the human mind and the variety of expressions while it transfers to the face and other limbs of the body.

Similarly, we have a number of visual or drawing (graphic) symbols for subjects so vague and abstract as Energy (radial zigzag lines); Luxury (lines with rich curvatures); Fire (conical or double conical lines); Water (Wavering horizontal lines); and similarly for Heat, Power, Concentration, Speed, Rest, Peace and Indolence, etc.

A proper understanding of these images (or symbols) nurtures in us a desire to go deep into the labyrinths of Nature and to explore our own selves. A man endowed with this knowledge has feelings of kindness and sympathy etc. towards the people and the world around him. This knowledge enhances his sensitivity (towards nature) and sensibility, and all art has come out of these two innate faculties of man.

While, on the one hand, we have a variety of symbols pertaining to the powers of nature i.e. Sun, Moon, Water, Air and Fire, we have, on the other, symbols of gods, goddesses and deities, expressed in the rural designs. The origin of these symbols in the village environment can be traced back to the faiths, beliefs and rituals, which the rural people attach to these expressions.

A circular image symbolises Sun and a circle (that which has no beginning, no middle and no end) means an aspiration for light, life, virtuality and continuity. The crescent-like image of Moon similarly depicts love for calmness and tranquility. Water

is considered as god (Varuna) air (Pavan) and fire (Agni). In these basic elements of nature, the village folk have as much of intuitive faith and trust, as any group or individual in the modern urban society. They adore these elements instinctively.

The inability of the urban people to understand and appreciate these forms is due to the fact that urban people try to explore the possibilities of imitation and mimicry of nature in these symbols, while the villagers express them on the basis of their instinct, their faith and their beliefs and not as an attempt at mere imitation governed by various rules of drawing. The symbols of gods, goddesses and deities (at times in humanised form) in rural designs are expressed in a rustic manner, because man has fundamental faith in the protective powers of these gods and goddesses in whom man's basic urges for life (preservation of self, procreation of self and destruction of that which endangers self) find expression. The idea of rituals for instance is an outcome of their instinct of self preservation.

Animals, trees, birds, flowers etc. are other examples of symbols or patterns which the villager makes use of in his rustic wall paintings.

These objects are the cause, and part, of the happiness, joy and prosperity for which man aspires in life. For the utility value these animals have got for him. The pair of bullocks or a horse or a camel are all the more important and for that reason more loved by the farmer. These animals help him earn his living.

The tree under which, the farmer sits (after the toil and labour of the day in the scorching Sun) and relishes his food has more positive meaning and finds due expression in the peasant art form.

Symbols, derived from the Kingdom of birds and flowers also play their part in the farmer's expressions. In all our preoccupation, we may not realise the amount of happiness, charm, grace and colour, which these birds render to the life of the village people, who, nevertheless, know the aesthetic appeal of these bits of pulsating life and, therefore, express them artistically.

Man writes his history in tears and laughter. Art is not the property of a few rich; it is a common property of all. The poor have as much right to understand, appreciate and practice art, as the rich have. Art expression does not arise from the possession of materials, but originates from the mind. Nature is the

fountainhead of art. Those who have a lovelier sensitivity towards Nature and its manifestations are instinctively acquainted with art.

II. A.N. SEHGAL*: Art should be conceived as an integral part of the primary school curriculum, because some experience with Art is involved in almost every field of human behaviour, apart from its value on intellectual and aesthetic grounds. History, Geography, Science, etc. are subjects which are intimately connected with the topics around which Art courses should be organised. The teacher of the primary school, teaching other subjects, experiences no difficulty in teaching Art, because it is so closely related to the other school subjects. The child should have training in colour, drawing and construction while engrossed in creative activity, inspired by school experiences outside the Art field.

'Art' in the primary school should then be an organised collection of creative and appreciative experiences with materials, growing out of the life of the child, and our school curriculum should be such that experiences that are vital and real, should find expression from the child. 'Art' as a subject is important since it helps such expressions.

The children at the primary level are imaginative and free. They are active and take delight in manipulating materials. The aims of Arts teaching therefore should be:

(1) to provide opportunities for self-expression, so as to help the children learn more effectively;

(2) to develop in them the design consciousness, so as to enable them to improve their appearances, their homes, their surroundings; and

(3) to emphasise the importance of their all round individual and social growth, enlarging the educational horizons and enriching their lives.

The unit of teaching should be such that maximum interest is manifested by the children. Without interest on the students' part, nothing worthwhile can be accomplished in the educational field. The unit may originate in other subject matter from the school curriculum. The stories they read in Hindi or English,

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* Shri A.N. Sehgal is Art Consultant in the Ministry of Community Development.

may be taken up as the basis for providing food in exciting their imaginations. Songs and poems may also be the subject of sketches and paintings.

Information is the main pivot around which Art activities may be built up. Whatever information the children gain at school, home or the playground, can be adequately channelised and expressed in art forms. The teacher should see that children, if they have been to a circus, may be asked to give their own truthful and uninhibited way an account of what they have seen and observed. The experience that has been of an interest and struck their imagination will find an outlet for expression. The subject may be a clown, lion, elephant, running horses, people in the gallery, acrobatic exercises, etc., etc.

## TOPICS FOR TEACHING

*Holiday*

The social significance of the holidays will be understood if children are told about these and asked to make paintings relating to:

Dussehra — Ravan, Sita, the conquest of Lanka by Rama, stories about Hanuman and monkeys, etc.

Holi — Significance of the festival of colour and merry-making. Other examples: Basant, Diwali, Lohri, X-mas, Id-ul-Fitr, etc.

*Recreations*

Hobbies — Toy-making, dolls, gardening, songs, football, hockey, cinema, dancing, etc., etc.

*Occupations*

Teacher — His role in school, what goes to make a good teacher or a bad teacher. Students feel differently on this subject and would love to paint this subject, if a teacher is their favourite. Other examples: Servant, farmer, tongawala, entertainer, monkey-man, 'jadugar', beggar, fisherman.

*Transportation*

Boats (boatmen with oars)
Beast of burden — donkey, elephant, camel.
Railways — engine, coaches, railway station, aeroplanes.

*Natural Resources*

Forests, hills, snowscapes, etc.

Firstly, there should be undirected use of crayons, opaque water colours, chalk or pastels on coloured or white large paper or takhties with coating of multani mitti. The children will paint representations associated with touch, sound, smell and movements. Strong primary colours, yellow, red, blue, sea-green plus white and black be provided.

Each male child coming to the first primary school has his own experiences gained by him at home and nearby environments within the community. His information is gained only through his five senses. The world to him has its own meaning. He will bring it out truthfully, if free expression is allowed. Some children will be shy to handle their materials. Their shyness should be broken through friendly treatment of the teacher and also through enabling them to work in groups in the class room.

Slowly this undirected activity could be replaced by the knowledge and information gained at school, playground or at home. Their interests in stories and poems, which could be narrated and read to them, will be enough to give a spark to their imagination, so as to enable them to bring out their experiences into their creative work. The other subjects taught should also be taken up as topics for painting and sketches along with the topics suggested above.

To improve their sense of touch, children should be given clay or plasticine to make shapes and forms, as known to them. After a little while, they will begin to enjoy manipulating with their fingers these materials and also learn how to build shapes and forms which they see around them.

Children of higher age groups should be given craft materials, *e.g.* cane, bamboo, sea shells, wood, soap, etc. to make anything that interests them. They could thus be made familiar with these materials found in their own environments.

The teacher should direct the activity in a way that interest is always exhibited on the part of the student with as little domination as possible. Art classes for children should be organised in the community areas with the help of local teachers. Such classes will go a long way in making people who will be securer socially, economically and culturally.

III. RAMESH CHANDRA*: The word Alpona is derived from the Sanskrit word ALIMPAN which points to the basic technique of this kind of artistic activities.

The word is current practically throughout India. Rangoli its other name holds an important position in the socio-religious life of the Hindus of India.

Alpona, which has attained its biggest development in Bengal and Madras, is used in these provinces on all occasions of religious and social ceremonies. Wherever a Hindu Diety is worshipped, the Alpona designs are drawn before, in order to create a peaceful artistic atmosphere around the place of worship.

Alpona is essentially adopted to a plain surface. Generally executed on the court yard or on the floor of the house, it is found on low wooden seats. It is quite often depicted on the outer surface of the earthen pots used in socio-religious rites.

It is often executed with rice powder mixed with water. (A certain quantity of rice is kept immersed for an hour or two in water and then ground into thin paste and kept in a small cup.) The design is never traced on the ground before the mixture is applied. The artist always starts his or her work from the centre of the Alpona and goes on building it round step by step with different decorative designs. Though white is the prevalent colour, some other colours are also introduced. As a general rule, liquid colours are used on certain occasions, however, they are made with powders of different materials, *e.g.* Haldi, Kumkum, Roli or Earth colours.

The following are the common motifs of Alpona:

(1) Lotus (2) Creepers (3) Animals (4) Trees and Plants.

Alpona is a feminine art. It is not generally taught in schools. The mother teaches it to her daughter in the home and the daughter passes it on to hers and thus the art has lived from one age to another. At each popular or family festival of a sacred nature, the women set themselves joyfully to decorate the place where the offerings of flowers and fruits are to be placed before a deity with different artistic patterns.

All the Alpona designs had their birth in women's imagination since ages. With one twist of the hand, they will draw

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* Shri Ramesh Chandra is Art Assistant in the Ministry of Community Development.

creepers, flowers and varied patterns and will even add to them what their imagination suggests.

It is difficult to say what has inspired these ritual decorations. It is the artistic feeling which torments the human heart, until it finds its means of expression. There is also the religious feeling working at the background of one's mind. As the art of Alpona is inspired by the popular religious festivals and it indeed is the essential part of them — a brief description of some of the more important Vratas may be of interest like: LAKSHMI VRATA, TOSHALE VRATA, SARASWATI VRATA, ASATHPATA VRATA. Each of these Vratas has its own symbol in the design in the Alpona made on the occasion.

Alpona is the cultural heritage of our ancestors and it should be the aim of all lovers of art and culture to save this heritage from becoming static and to make it popular. It is requested that suggestions be made for popularising Alpona in all the States of India.

IV. A.N. SEHGAL: The term Social Education has now taken the place of Adult Education which was primarily concerned with the problem and the need for literacy education. Social Education is accepted in a wider context than just to give a person a knowledge of the 3 R's, or any other language needed by him to communicate with his fellow beings. Communication is in fact the primary need of every member of society and art becomes a very necessary part of such a communication. Communication is involved in all forms that operate the processes of human growth. Verbally language is only a little developed; and full command of it, even on the mainly intellectual level, is hardly gained by even a few, in any developed culture. It does, of course, provide social intercourse but is quite inadequate in itself. Gestures and expressions through art symbols form a part of the whole — that is needed towards mutual expression in the social environments. Taking for example, early expression of the people in the pre-historic times, we see that language was not so well developed but only visual symbols in arts became their means of communication and provided a channel for their emotional expressions, the remains of which we find in the cave paintings, the rock sculptures and other decorations they made on the articles for their daily use.

Children, like artists, are affected by shapes and sounds around them. Given the opportunity to do so, they express in works of art interpreting the social environment they live in. Similarly,

they gain awareness as they grow about their own individual places in society and they gain certain amount of perception which gives an impetus to their creative urge that makes them express the gained knowledge into creative forms. The child thus goes on exploring environments and makes efforts in endeavouring to comprehend it, and himself in relation to it. Through his expanding comprehension, he increases his feeling of security in the world which widens every day under his eyes. His expression contains an element of what he feels about situations and persons. The expression of his feelings and thoughts about the environments that he brings out in art symbols, evokes social comments which in turn has a bearing on his behaviour in the environments Thus, through a process of art expression, there is a spirit of self education which is hardly provided by any other mode of education. As has been said, an experience involved in the process of artistic creation is in itself an educative one and that art is, therefore, an essential instrument in any system of education. In this context, we have taken the Social Education to be providing an overall orbit for education for the individual. Taking from this view, art is a necessary component of such an education.

Education has a two-fold purpose; to develop the personality and the capacity of the individual and to effect an understanding between man and man. It is doubtful if the personality can be fully developed unless the creative experience can be expressed in creative forms. Slowly, he exerts to do this with skill and exactitude. The aim and purpose of education would remain completely unfulfilled, unless the individual can bring out only such experiences which can be communicated by specific symbols which can be termed as works of art.

Every one of us needs to release himself emotionally and spiritually and this release is helped mainly through creative work in the arts. This emotional release is usually in direct proportion to the intensity with which the individual identifies himself with the immediate environments. It is always of a type in which experiences of the self are expressed. Without such an expression, the individual's participation in the social environments will not be fully effected, for he will remain a bottle-neck of unchannelised feelings and emotions which need an immediate release and expression. Frustrations and other unsolved problems also need any expression; it is only through art that such feelings are channelised, thus affording the individual to live calmly and peacefully. The artistic expression has been of great interest to

the psychologists in knowing the trend of the individual and his feelings towards himself and his environments and it is, therefore, important that such expressions are ventilated from time to time, so that the individual lives like a normal being.

Slowly, the increasing ability of the individual to live co-operatively in a society manifests itself and becomes one of the major factors of a great significance in human development. This can be achieved after the child develops from the very beginning by learning to identify himself and he will then be better able to extend beyond himself and see the needs of others. This is how he gains the Social Consciousness. The inclusion of self and others in his creative work provides him with the realisation that his own needs, as also those of others, are most important for awakening the social consciousness, for without such a consciousness, co-operation with the community would be difficult to achieve.

It is only through art work that the individual can assert himself and express himself. Art experience provides him the power to be independent. The art experience, related to the environments in which he lives, also enables him to be within the orbit of the group and society around him. The individual cannot be regimented because he is free to choose his own symbols of expression in art forms. Thus, he gains an individuality which otherwise might be trampled in the process of learning through the 3 R's. Every one has an urge to express and it becomes an imperative need of the individual to channelise thoughts, feelings and emotions. From the very beginning, the child takes delight in scribbling, the adult sees the need for expressing the bottled up emotions. Similarly, even in later life, the expression becomes almost a necessity for the vision and memories of the past haunt the mind.

There is also a recreational aspect of expression in art. It is only in play and activity that such expressions become realities. Every individual needs to recreate while engaged in the learning process.

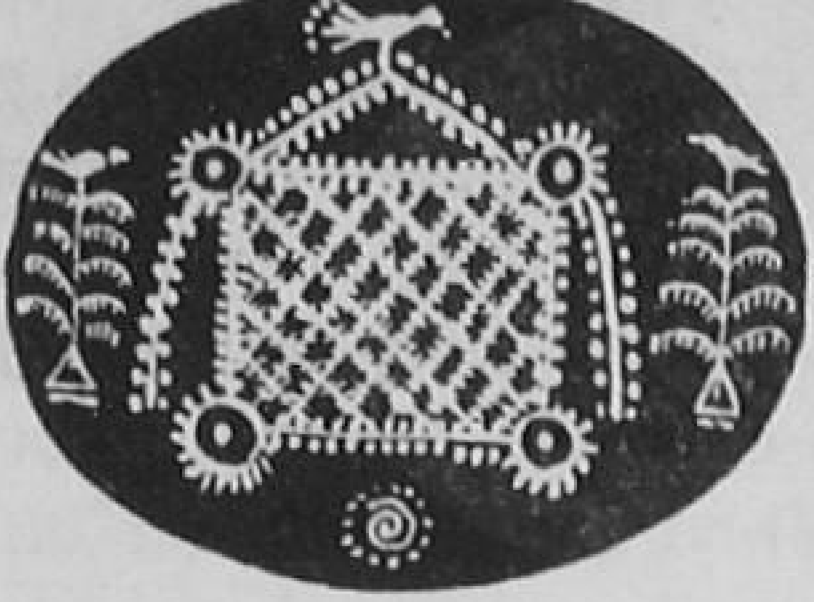
The desire to create and communicate experiences, to externalise emotions and feelings, had led man to create the spirit in which they expressed themselves, in relationship to their environments, through works of art. All the societies that have gone-by have left a record of art expressions. Through them we make a study of their mode of life, behaviour and their response to the groups and other societies around them.

When an individual has leisure, he may fail to make use of it or may abuse it. Bad habits become his greatest enemy. Indolence and lethargy are great ills. We must somehow provide an opportunity that leisure is adequately utilised. Art enables them to use leisure time as fruitfully as possible. It also provides a way towards social cohesion which is essentially needed in our modern society. When people can sit on a common platform, *e.g.* an art club and express themselves, they learn to create bonds between themselves. They remove the prejudices that may exist between them. We can safely minimise, if not eradicate, the quarrels, hooliganism, litigation, rivalries and factions which have at their base, a need to express — an energy in misuse, which can be channelised through art expression.

Art provides an opportunity for the people to work in groups. For staging a play, decorations and sets have to be prepared for which individuals sit and think together contributing labour and aesthetic taste to the collective effort that they put up for the audience. Similarly, at the time of religious festivals art symbols and forms are made by one and all to add to the gaiety in colour and decoration. The festivals have a social significance and art lends a helping hand towards the enjoyment and observance of such festivals.

What we need is to understand the value of art in our society We should not divorce it away from life. Art helps us in our living a better life and we should form art clubs where everyone should be enabled to come, in order to create and express. People should be helped to revive their folk designs and symbols to add charm and colour to their drab life.

Social Education in Russia, as well as the Cultural Mission in Mexico have given an opportunity to the people to learn through creative arts. They are taught in museums, gallaries and art centres, that revive them aesthetically as well as culturally and also contribute a lot to their social education schemes. It is only through art education that social education work will be completed.



## Discussion and Decisions*

SHRI Surjan Singh Gill,† who took the chair said the Seminar was the first of its kind. Its aim was to provoke and develop interest among the field workers for rural arts and crafts. Art occupied an important place in Social Education programmes and was an effective medium of communication. He was confident that the Seminar would certainly give an impetus to Arts and Aesthetics in the community development programme, thereby reviving the lost glories of our heritage. Shri U.C. Ghildyal‡ expressed his confidence that the Seminar would go a long way towards reviving folk art which had all along been a source of mental relaxation in the villages. The need for revival of folk art in villages was highly essential for all round development of our rural people and this would be possible only through cultural renaissance, resulting through such Seminars.

Referring to Shri S.S. Dutta's paper, Shri A.N. Sehgal said that proper impetus must be given to this movement for rural life and for that, we would have to develop proper understanding among the field workers as to what rural art was. It would naturally create appreciation for arts and aesthetics and it would give an impetus to this movement. We must develop aesthetic sense among the rural people. Exhibitions should be organised in various blocks and rural art encouraged. The development staff should provide motivation to the people to express themselves in art. Rural art is the most primitive type of art and we should try to understand regional peculiarities. The community development programme is bringing about changes in the outlook of the people and further creates acceptance of such values which would indirectly have its impact on the symbols and forms of rural art.

* On the morning of 11.4.58

† Shri Surjan Singh Gill is the Director, Social Education Organisers' Training Centre, Nilokheri.

‡ Shri U.C. Ghildyal is the Principal, Development Officers' Training Centre, Nilokheri.

The delegates agreed that some expert study should be undertaken inorder to find out regional peculiarities of art. There was concensus of opinion that the artists working in various training centres, should be sent to other regions to study the folk art of those regions and compare and contrast the special features of the regional art with the art of their own region.

It was pointed out that village environments were not conducive to the development of art but we must ensure that our young children got adequate opportunities for the expression and development of their ideas and for their mental and physical development. Village teachers must be involved in this process and only cheap and locally available materials and talents should be used. There should be no imposition of ideas from the trained artists.

In order to make the teachers more effective, it was decided that five or six schools situated in the villages around the Training Centres should be selected for intensifying this work among children. Teachers should be given necessary training so that they may be able to stimulate and develop the aesthetic sense among the children. The teacher should be able to fathom people's talent and encourage art. At some places, earth of various colours is available and such material should be used for painting. Personality of the child must find expression in creative art. We had Shankar's exhibitions but there was no corner for rural child art. Shri A. Prakash* expressed his delight at the unexpected success which the Seminar had achieved. He was optimistic about the impact of the Seminar on the promotion of folk-art and emphasised that art work should be related to the economic life of the village people, most of whom were poor and were greatly handicapped for their cultural pursuits due to their economic problems. The economic problems were there, but it did not mean that cultural life of the rural people was to be ignored completely. Rural minds must find expression. Shri Prakash suggested that the villager must be given a sense of pride and pleasure in his surrounding: he should not be made to look small. The time had come when the Social Education Organisers of all the Blocks should be given refresher courses in the cultural aspects of our programme, especially in arts and aesthetics. Model Village Scheme, which was still operative included art as

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* Shri A. Prakash is the Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of Community Development.

an integral part of the scheme. Saidpur village should become a model for other villages to follow. The creation of a separate Ministry of Culture at the Centre, augured well for the future of arts and aesthetics.

The delegates then resumed discussions on the paper 'Art and the Child' by Shri A.N. Sehgal. Sardar Sohan Singh* observed that the soul of man kind flowered through art. Our aim should be to provide opportunities to children for the expression of their personalities. Shri A.R. Deshpande† said that art was an expression of the inner urges of the mind. It was a play-attitude of the mind. In Basic Education, we try to couple art with utility which kills spontaneity in developing child art. Local material and local talent should be used in schools for the development of aesthetic sense.

It was unanimously decided that a certain amount of the budget in the development blocks should be set apart for the development of arts and aesthetics in villages.

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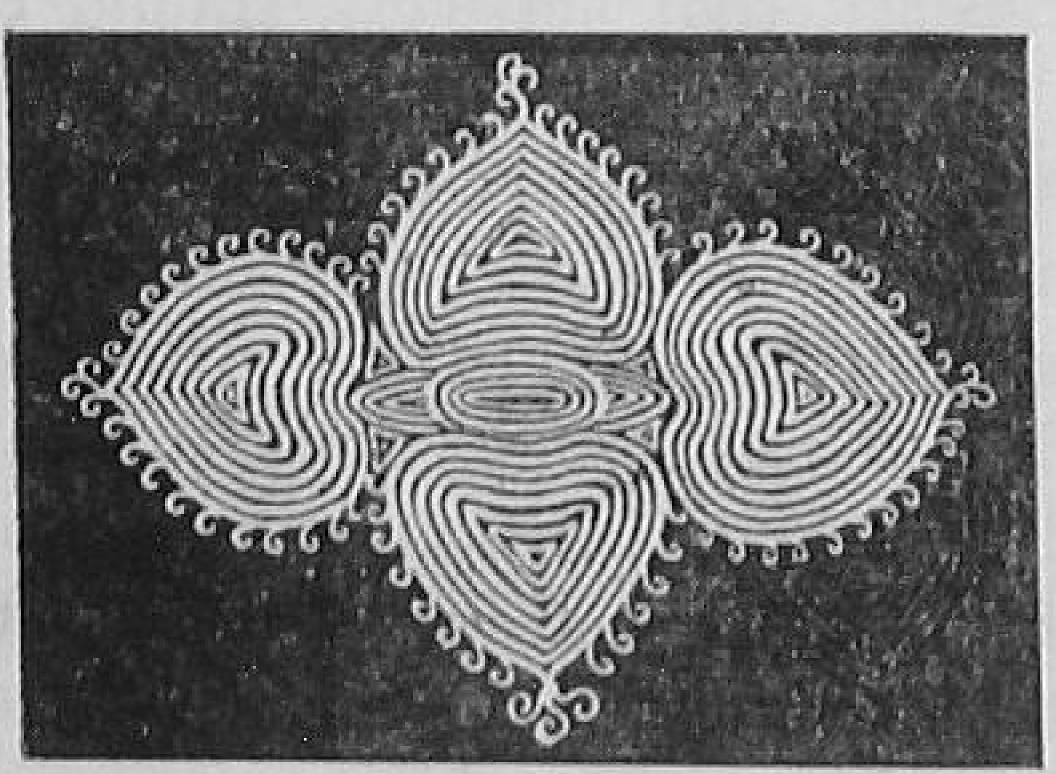
* Sardar Sohan Singh is the Assistant Educational Adviser in the Ministry of Education.

† Shri A.R. Deshpande is the Director, Fundamental Education Centre, Government of India.



## Discussion*

SARDAR Sohan Singh, speaking as a 'student of life and philosophy' said that 'art is not the highest expression of human life and experience' and that he would approach the problem posed for him from three different angles:

First in an experiment carried on by a German Scientist, Koehler, with monkeys which were well-kept, well-fed and had leisure, it was discovered that they learned to dance after first having stumbled on producing noise with their feet. This is equally true of human beings where art is created. It is the security and leisure that often create art. When a society develops a definable class structure, it creates conditions for art as an institution. Art, as an institution in this sense, is primarily an urban phenomenon. The oppressed classes create art of their own to escape from the burdens and mental strains of their life. Art in this sense is nothing but recreation.

Secondly, art can add to the dimensions of human experience. It can enrich human living by a livelier sense of colour, line and harmony. It can make education easier and more meaningful. The assimilating power of art through various devices is more easy. Also the tensions of life in urban areas, which are more acute and more real than in the villages, can be resolved through art.

Thirdly a study of pre-historic art, as far back as twenty five thousand years ago revealed that the drawings found in the caves of Spain, France and other places were primarily of a religious nature. In fact a study of history of art indicates conclusively that art and religion were very closely connected. It was religion that inspired art in history. There were times when art flourished inspite of the collapse of religion as in Renaissance. But this was due to the fact that art itself became a kind of religion. Even to this day, in India and elsewhere, during religious festivals, activity involving art is very much in evidence like dance,

* On afternoon of 11.4.58.

decoration, etc. Art, therefore, he thought, was not as important as science or religion. The former concerned itself with probing the mysteries of the cosmic world and discovering truth and goodness. The latter helped man to reach sublime heights of goodness and truth. Art could not lift man too high. Nor could it make him sink low. It could only give him pleasure and not the soul-stirring experience which could uplift him. In the conditions existing today in India, work and more work should be our motto and not the wasting of our time in art with its doubtful values.

Other delegates felt in general that the views expressed by the speaker were in the extreme and did not represent their feelings because they believed that art and its practice ennobled the human soul and made living more worthwhile. Other points expressed in the discussion were:

(1) That art can help eradicating social evils.

(2) That art can communicate to fellow human beings with deep personal intimacy and understanding.

(3) That art is timeless and transcends time.

(4) That art can be a spiritual experience as deep and real as many scientific truths or religious experiences.

(5) That art is not often the result of security and leisure but more often the result of personal tension, anxiety and frustration.

Shri A.R. Deshpande speaking on 'Drama, Plays and Music and their need for every-day life' said that the appeal of art to human mind is a sensory appeal. He analysed the difference between the fine arts and the useful arts and indicated which of the fine arts are appreciated and through which sense of understanding. He observed that an artist was not a special kind of man, but it is a special kind of sensitivity which made him different from others. Three kinds of activities make the totality of a man's life. These are: work, rest and recreation, the last being an activty in between work and rest. There is a leisured class which consumes art, but the leisured class is not necessarily the creative one, because, if art were the creation of the leisured class only, much could have been possible to do by way of art. He gave the example of the vast Raj Smand lake of Rajasthan studded with marble statues which was the creation of a time when the

country was facing famine and those who created it were under the stress of calamity.

Shri Deshpande emphasised that folk music had its own scales, and attempts should not be made to introduce new strains of music with a view to improving it. Such attempts vitiated the spontaneous and instinctive expression of folk life, and gave it an unnecessary twist which spoiled its natural beauty and vitality and appeared strikingly alien in the whole setting. He emphasised the need of avoiding improvisation of folk music by adopting film songs and sounded a warning that this was a danger which would spoil the natural vigour of folk art and all our traditional forms and ways of art would face the hazard of losing what we had preserved for the last two thousand years. Drama outgrew the original form of mimicry in which it made its beginning and was later on utilised to present special features of social evils with a view to eradicate them.

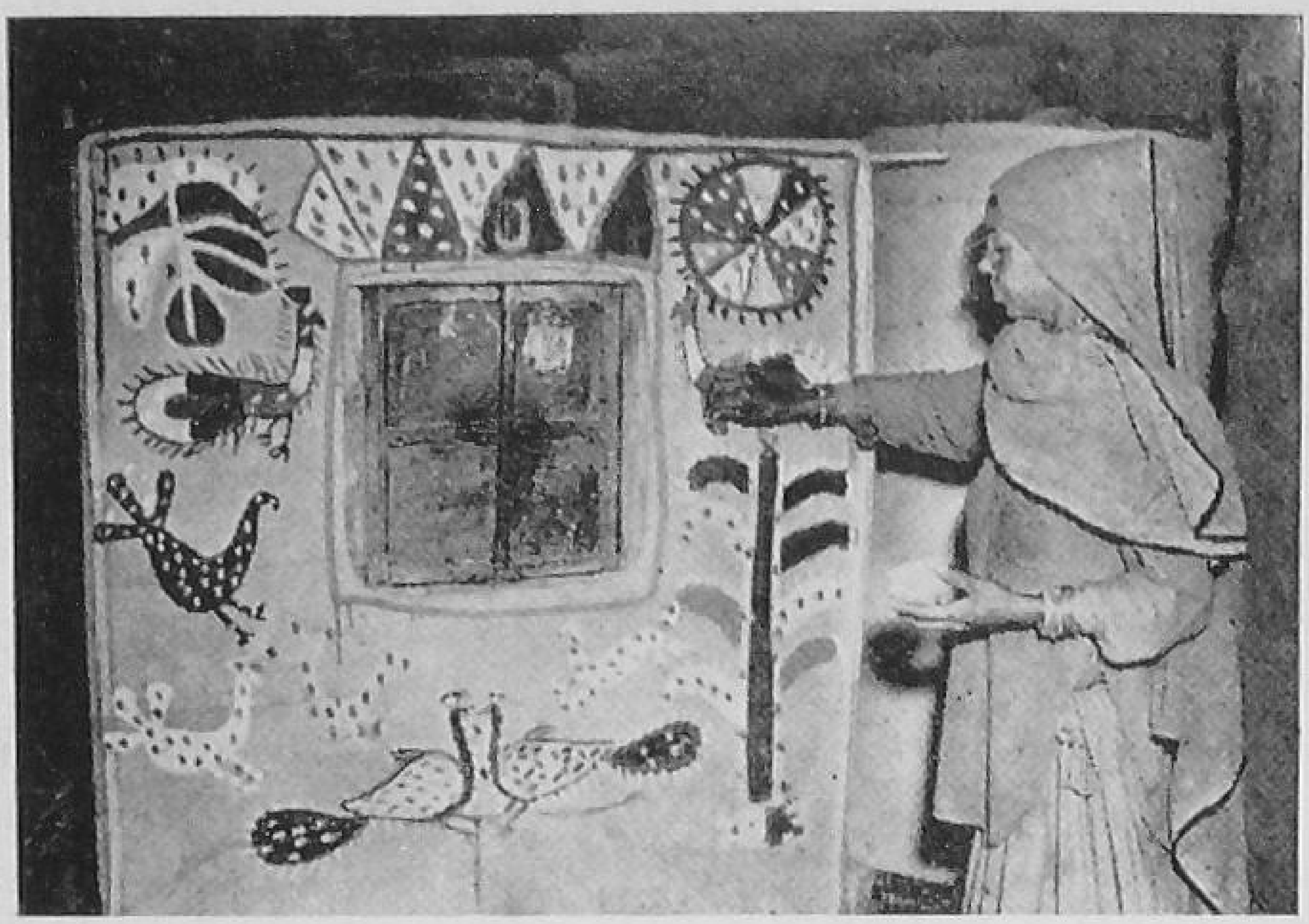
The artistic instinct gave to human beings the speciality of rising above the instincts which he shared with animal life. The role of art in life was to elevate the values of life and to exercise an ennobling influence on society.

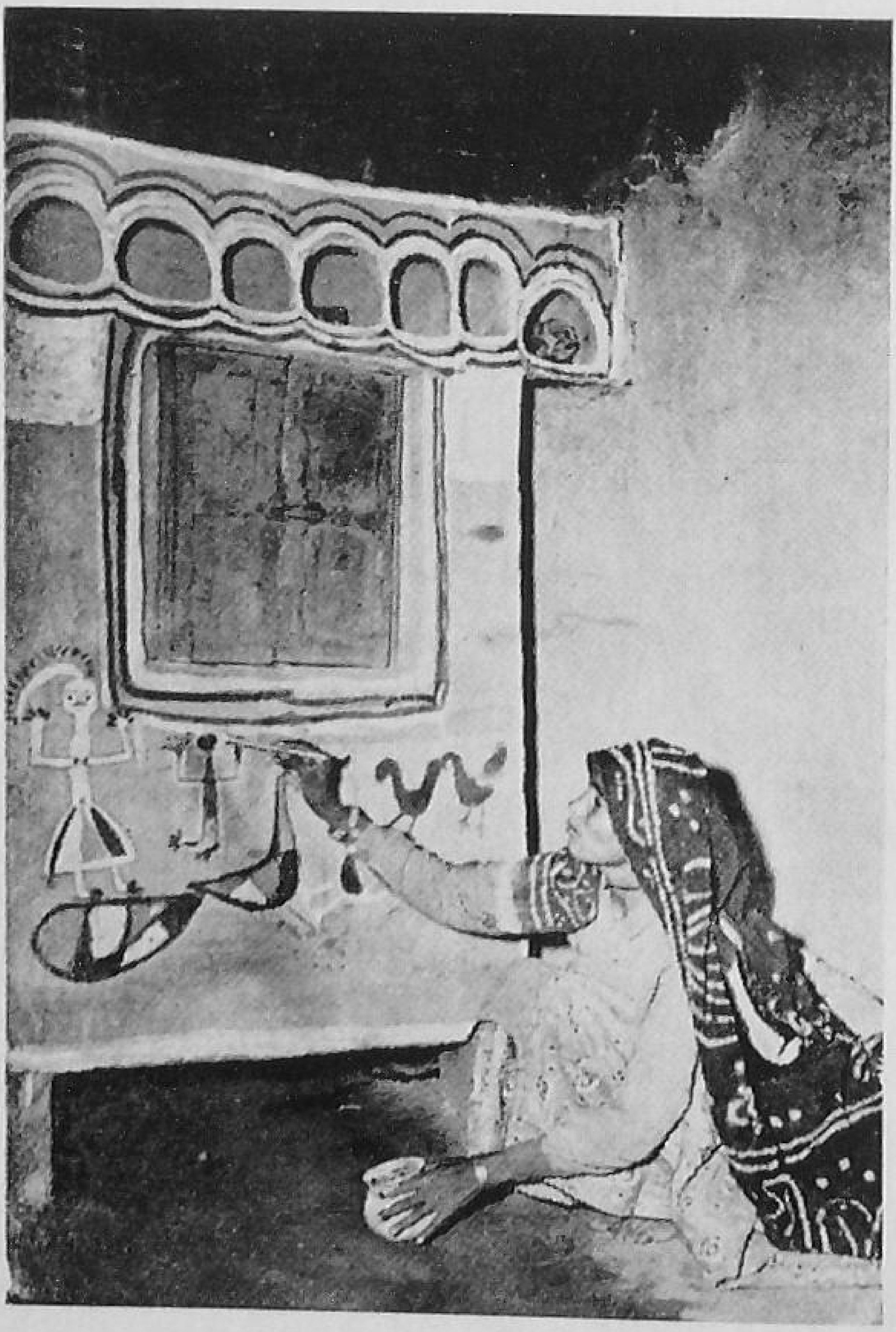
Some delegates suggested that the superiority of a fine art depended upon, and was determined by, the extent to which extraneous material was used by an artist in the realisation of his ideal. According to this standard, architecture was the lowest of all fine arts because the realisation of the ideal of an architect depended on the use of extraneous material like bricks, mortar, etc. Sculpture, according to Basil Worsford, was superior to architecture because the sculptor chisels out a form out of a rock of marble and gives a static piece of marble the dynamic of a living figure as it were. Painting is superior to sculpture in the sense that, by the use of colours in two dimensions, the painter gives the idea of depth and height, as well as movement. Music is still superior to painting because an artist in music depended for realisation of his ideal on sound and for better effect it was necessary to have some accompaniment of instruments. But a musician is superior in so far as he uses the fluid medium of sound for presenting his ideal. A poet is superior to a musician in the sense that he uses words which are mere symbols or combinations of symbols to realise his ideal. The poet has the advantage of combining the visual and audatory senses, which are employed in appreciation of painting and music respectively and, therefore,

the dexterity of combining both media of understanding for a better effect makes the poet a superior artist. The medium of expression employed by an artist in music is more fluid and universal than words which presuppose the understanding of a language in which poetry is made whereas the appeal of sound combinations is universally acceptable and transcends limitations of language. It was appreciated that drama and music go a long way to educate the people in an informal manner and it was agreed that these media should be extensively employed for education.

*Prof. Humayun Kabir, Minister for Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs inaugurating the Seminar*

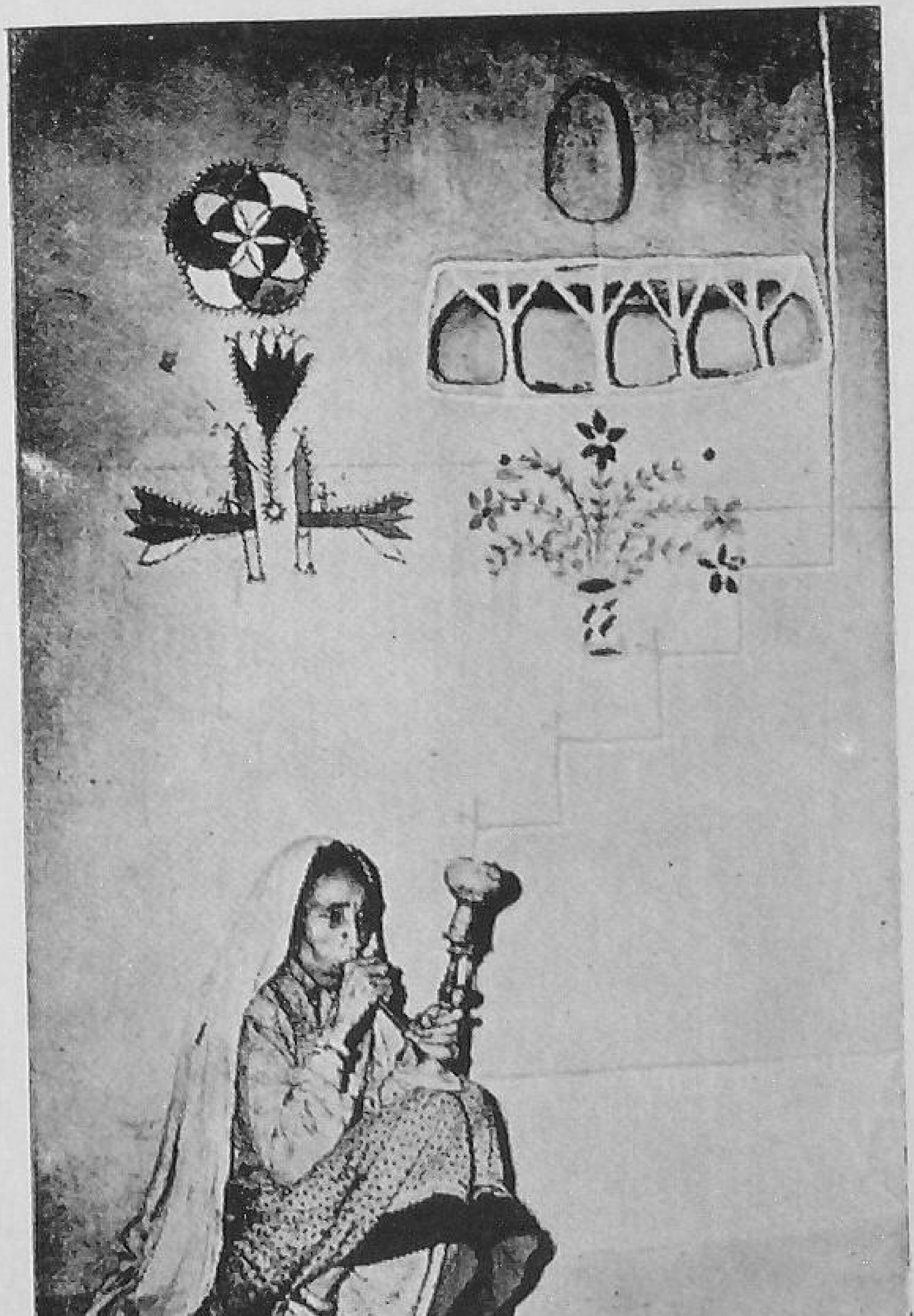
*Prof. Humayun Kabir along with Shri S. K. Dey, Minister for Community Development visiting the Folk Art Exhibition*





*Village women decorating the mud walls of their dwellings.*

*Shri Deshpande stressing a point during the discussion.*



*A village woman enjoys the 'hookah' in her decorated hut.*

*A scene from the Cultural Programme performed by the village artists.*

*An Open Air Natural Stage was erected on the village lake where cultural performances of village artists were shown.*

I. Cultural Centre for Village Surroundings

II. Arts and Crafts Amongst Bills (Rajasthan)

III. Mobile Stage

IV. Ghumar and Panihari of Rajasthan

V. Role of Arts and Crafts in Community Development

I. SHRI A.N. SEHGAL: To provide a harmonious living to its inhabitants, a village needs to have a cultural and aesthetic life. This need is felt everywhere. More so in the fast developing rural surroundings. The residents of the village belong to different socio-economic groups and hence some common cultural and artistic bonds need to be created, so that they can have a cohesive and healthy living. The present emphasis of all our endeavours has been to raise their economic standard. Now, the needs for an artistic and cultural revival are being deeply felt, so that the traditional values, which are getting faded out or lost, are brought to the forefront.

Hence the dire need for the establishment of a cultural centre for each village, or for a group of villages. The purposes of such centres are:—

1. To channelise their thoughts, feelings and emotions in creative activities *i.e.* dancing, drama, plays (theatrical arts); drawing, painting and sculpture (plastic arts).

2. To give the residents of the village, coming from different socio-economic groups, opportunities to come together on a common platform.

3. To provide recreation to the residents when they indulge in activities ennumerated above.

4. To encourage, through these creative activities, the revival of the traditional arts as well as to give an opportunity

to the talented ones to pursue a career in any of the fields of art of their choice.

5. To hold exhibitions of paintings, sculptures, photographs and models, where the artists are to be invited from distant places to exhibit and give demonstrations of their works to the interested people.

6. To arrange for performances of dance, drama, plays and music by theatrical groups.

7. To start classes for drawing, painting, sculpture, dance, drama and music for the children, and for adults at convenient hours.

8. To encourage literary activities through the provision of a library where books, periodicals and newspapers will be made available to the members of the community.

9. To arrange open-air performances on various cultural activities from time to time.

The cultural centre will have a small building of its own. It will encourage all the traditional games and activities for children as well as adults. A children's park may also be organised and maintained by the centre.

This cultural centre will be directed by the village panchayat, development staff and village school teacher. The initial expenses may be met by the Development Department as well as from the panchayat's contribution.

II. SMT. SUJATA MITRA*: The Art Wing of Vidya Bhawan S.E.O. Training Centre, Udaipur organised a 10-day Block placement Camp at Bhootala village in Badagaon Block from February 20, to March 1, 1958. In this camp a group of eleven students undertook the work of intensive study of arts and crafts prevalent among the Bhils — a tribal section of Rajasthan. The chief motive behind the study was to bring to the forefront the patterns of tribal arts and crafts prevailing in this area for the development of aesthetic sense among the S.E.O.s, but this study revealed a number of new things and provided sufficient material to confirm our ideas regarding the position of arts and crafts in remote villages.

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* Smt. Sujata Mitra is Art Instructor, Vidya Bhawan SEOTC, Udaipur.

Due to the constant impact of western civilisation and culture, a significant change has taken place discernible not only in physical terms but abundantly manifested in the ideas, attitudes, personal decoration and in the decoration of the home stead. However, there are places where the primitive society has preserved age-old things which even today give a glimpse of the culture of our country. Our venue of study was fortunately a place where little effects of modernisation were visible, as far as the subject of our study was concerned.

The urban people are either not aware of the huge treasures of art which the village people have in their day to day life, or they are so influenced by the Western culture that they have lost the aesthetic sense of appreciation. Even today this lack of appreciation is the main cause of unpopularity and decay of our Indian art. Throughout the study, our objective had been to collect all the designs of their dresses, ornaments, wall decoration etc. for our art wing. We have also collected certain specimens of their every-day life.

Our findings may be divided in the following six heads:—

1. Dresses of the women.
2. Dresses of the Men.
3. Ornaments of the Women.
4. Designs of Mehndi, Bindi and Tatoos.
5. Decoration of Home Stead.
6. Decoration of Mandirs and images.

This study is limited to three Bhil hamlets having about 125 families. About 95% inhabitants of this area are landless labourers. They live in small tiled and mud huts.

(i) *Dresses of Women*:

The dress pieces on the body of the women were three, namely skirt or Ghagra, Choli or short blouse, orni or scarf. All these pieces were gaudy in colour. The most popular colours of the skirt was red with black and white prints. The next popular combination was red prints on blue back ground.

For the skirt a very thick material of Markin is used and it is printed by Chipa — class of printers mainly Mohamaden. Bhil women use this printed material for their skirts only. Not a single mill print cloth was found on their body. These printed

clothes are produced at the cottage industry centres in the villages surrounding Udaipur. The prints were of two type:—

(a) Black prints, made with the help of wooden blocks of carved designs.

(b) Resist prints, made with the help of a special preparation of mud which is applied with the help of the wooden Blocks on the cloth. This mud resists the colour. So when the whole cloth piece is dipped into the colour the portions covered with mud remains white. Afterwards the mud is washed. This process is similar to that of the process of Javanese Batik prints.

For Choli, the women use different types of coloured cut pieces joined together. The colours are contrasting to each other *e.g.* red, green, black, blue etc. They use mill prints. The Bhils use a typical type of "tie and dey" prints or Bandhin which is the speciality of Rajasthan on orni too. We found that a mixed type of printing was adopted.

Tie and dey prints make different colours on the body and the borders.

There was also the resist print method to get fine designs on it. The colour combination of the orni was generally of red back-ground, having black or yellow border with a black circle in the middle. On the black borders there were yellow or white dotted designs of geometrical type.

The designs of skirt were ornamental, having flowers, leaves etc. and on orni, along with geometrical dotted designs were parrots, elephants, women with pots etc. The widows used black skirt, Choli, and Dhari, with a light red paint.

(ii) *Dress of Men*:

The men usually had three dress pieces on their body (1) Dhoti, (2) Kurta, (3) Turban or Fata. Dhotis and kurtas were white in colour. The old people generally used frilled short kurta with long sleeves. The young men used kurta of the same fashion as is used by Urban labourers, having short sleeves, striped materials and plain cut with pockets. This modern-style kurta needs the same size of cloth, as is needed in old fashioned kurta and the same amount is spent on its stitching, but it was not so artistic as the old one.

All of them used printed turban of thick white material, with black or red prints on it. These prints were done with the ordinary black printing technique. The designs were ornamented having flower, leaves etc.

About the dress and the quality of the dress materials, Bhils have a definite social restrictions. The quality of designs used by the Majans or Brahmans or by the other caste cannot be used by the Bhils.

(iii) *Women's Ornaments*:

The Bhil women use brass anklets upto 5 to 8 pairs in number. They are not allowed to use silver on their feet, though all the other caste groups use silver. Anklets are plain, round shaped without any carvings on it.

For the hands the Bhil women usually use bangles made of coconut shell cut into round pieces and painted with lak. Beautiful fine designs are sometimes found on these bangles. The number of bangles on each hand varies from 5 to 17. Married women whose husbands are living use armlets of the same material as that of the bangles on the upper arm. From elbow upto the shoulders it was covered with bangles, produced in the villages by the special craftsmen.

The Bhil women are not allowed to use ivory bangles considered to be fit for aristocracy among the Rajputs and Brahmans. Besides the colourful bangles, the Bhil women also use silver and lead rings, sometimes several rings on one finger. For ears also they use many types of rings, such as *jhumar, jela, balees* etc. These too are many in number. The necklace, made of beads etc. is also used. The designs of ornaments, though too heavy, were really of very high taste and standard. Sometimes when too many ornaments are too heavy to wear and also put a hinderance in work, they wore them thinking that they added to their beauty.

(iv) *Design of Mehndi*:

The Bhil women do not use Bindi (Decoration on the forehead). Occasionally they use Mehndi on palm, but without making any designs. Tatoos are found almost on every woman (Even some men have the tatoos). They easily spare a few annas for getting it done. Generally parrot, flower tub and a lady with pots are to be found in the tatoos designs. Their idea is that it also adds to their beauty.

(v) *Decoration of Homestead*:

The houses of the Bhils consist of one room only. They live and cook in the same room. If any of them have cattles, they keep them in one corner of the same room. The inside and

outside walls are washed with lime and red mud. The rooms are kept clean although their belongings are not well arranged — a few in number, some earthen pots, baskets, a few clothes and beds made with torn clothes. There used to be no window in the room, but only one door was found. Every door was decorated with a nice straw garland — to protect the house from evil spirits. On the house wall no decoration was found. The temple walls, however were nicely decorated. On occasions *e.g.* marriage and festivals, they decorate their house walls with orange, green red colours. The painting consisted of animals, parrots, peacocks, houses, elephants etc.

At some places the pictures of a train or a hunter with guns etc. were found, and there the modern influence on art could easily be seen. Common paintings were parrots eating the grain, lady carrying water and Rajput Sardar on horseback.

(vi) *Decoration of Mandirs*:

The images of gods and goddesses were remarkable, especially the images at Nagdevi, Bhairon Baba and Amba Devi. The god Nagraj, which is the snake god, was beautifully coloured and a gem was fixed on his head. He is also known as Dharamraj. At some places these images were engraved on the mud walls and at other places drawn on the walls with brush and colour. The painted images of sun god, Eklingnath and goddess Durga were quite lively and beautiful. These paintings were done by the potters of the village and this hereditory art was monopolised by the potters only.

From these findings of our study, many inferences can be drawn. To mention a few important ones, the villagers had an immense respect and love for art. Some of the villagers who saw our camp decoration were so impressed that they themselves started introducing us to the Bhils and did good propaganda, remarking here and there that some very good persons who can make gods and goddesses with their hands, had come to the village. A leader of the village went to the extent and said that we as much respect the man who draws and prints images of god as we respect god itself. Such remarks can give an idea of their feelings for art and artists.

It has been rightly said that like literature, art is the mirror of society. It depicts the religious beliefs, customs, manners etc. But there is something more important, namely the power to attract the passerby and to convey to him a message of its own.

The drawings and paintings of Bhils not only portray their love for art and aesthetic sense, but also tell us something about their creative inner urges. It is because of the latter that we find a distinct similarity in the images of gods and goddesses of the Advasis of different corners of India. The snake god Nagdeva and Amba Mata are practically the same everywhere. By this we can safely connote that there was unity in the cultural pattern of Advasis of the far east and west of India. That through art work, a better understanding can be made is clear from an incident which happened during our study. In one hamlet of Bhils, the visit of our trainees was misunderstood. They did not come out even to talk to them. They even closed their doors. Then an artist of ours drew a portrait of the most non-co-operating Bhil leader on the wall. When he saw his own portrait, he was so pleased that he called all the rest to see it. Afterwards, requests for drawing the portraits came from each quarter. Repeated requests for decorating walls etc. were entertained by our trainees and we got the maximum co-operation from them. The men folk requested their wives to learn this art, as it gave them pleasure to look at these drawings. On several other occasions, when it seemed difficult to approach the villagers, art came to our rescue and, to our surprise, the situation was quite reversed.

I can say with confidence, therefore, that, if not the best, at least one of the best ways to approach the villagers, is through art.

III. SHRI SATYENDRA NATH*: We have a Mobile Stage which has been found very useful in organising cultural shows in the villages. It very much adds to the beauty of our programmes and leaves a deep impression on the minds of the villagers. This stage has been constructed at a cost of Rs. 2,000/-. Three persons can erect this stage within two hours, and it can be dismantled within half an hour. It is so strongly fixed on the ground, that its arrangements cannot be disturbed by any jerk or strong wind.

The mobile stage can be divided into three parts: (i) Platform, (ii) Superstructure, and (iii) other accessories.

(i) *Platform*:

The size of the platform is 14′ x 16′, which is quite suitable for all kinds of dramas, plays and dances. The platform consists of 8 equal wooden boards of 7′ x 4′ x 1½′, fitted with

*Shri Satyendra Nath is Instructor, Vidya Bhawan SEOTC, Udaipur.

three buttons, two at both ends and one in the centre. Each board is made of 4 wooden planks joined with the help of 8 dowels. Four board battons are projected $1\frac{1}{2}''$ for interlocking purposes. This also brings the boards into one unit. Four front board battons are projected at one end only. Each board is fitted with six mild steel plates of $5'' \times 4'' \times 3/16''$, fitted with 4 coach bolts of $3\frac{1}{2}'' \times \frac{1}{4}''$ at both ends of the battons. A.G.I. socket of $1\frac{1}{2}''$ is welded in the centre of each plate to receive a $2' \times 1\frac{1}{4}''$ G.I. pipe leg, one end of which is welded with a 3″ diameter $\times \frac{1}{4}''$ M.S. plate for the firm support on the ground and the other end is threaded upto 2″ for minor adjustments on uneven ground.

The four corner legs are made of $2' \times 1\frac{1}{2}''$ G.I. pipes, one end of which is threaded upto 2″ length and the other end welded with a $4'' \times 3'' \times 3/8''$ M.S. plate. A.G.I. socket of $1\frac{1}{2}''$ is also welded on the plate on the side of the leg to receive the end pillar of $13' \times 1\frac{1}{2}''$ G.I. pipe. A piece of G.I. pipe $5'' \times 2''$ is also welded on the same side of the legs, to which the socket is welded just below the threaded position of the legs for firm support of the pillar. Four corner plates are of $5'' \times 4'' \times \frac{1}{4}''$ M.S. plate, bolted on all the four corners of the platform by means of 4 bolts of $3'' \times 3''$. Each plate is welded with a G.I. socket on the one half of the plate and a through hole of 2″ diameter is boared on the other and this hole is also in the board, as the end pillar will pass through it.

(ii) *Superstructure*:

The pillars are of $13' \times 1\frac{1}{2}''$ G.I. pipes threaded on the bottom end to be screwed up on the G.I. socket welded to the foot plate of the front leg.

On the front left pillar, 19″ below the upper end, a piece of G.I. pipe $1'' \times 1\frac{1}{2}''$ is welded. This pipe is to receive a G.I. pipe piece of $9'' \times \frac{3}{4}''$. Both these pipes are fixed together firmly with the help of steel pins. These pins pass through the holes $\frac{1}{4}''$ below the end, made for this purpose 46″ below the top end. One G.I. pipe of $\frac{3}{4}'' \times 2''$ is welded at right angle to the pillar. This is to receive the side wing main pipe.

$2\frac{1}{2}''$ below the top of the pillars, a small hole of 3/8″ is drilled through. This is for fixing up a three way G.I. elbow $1\frac{1}{2}''$, whose all the branches are extended by welding a G.I. pipe of $2'' \times 6''$ and a through hole $\frac{1}{2}''$ is drilled in the Centre of all the extended pipes for bolting the upper pipes. Front elbows are welded with a

G.I. pie of 2″ × 1″ diameter at 45° pointing towards the front of the stage with a through hole in the centre. In it a G.I. pipe or 9″ for *jhalar* is fitted. There are two holes 9″ × 12″ respectively below the top end for fixing up the pully arrangements for the curtain. Below 10″ from the top end of the right pillar there is a square hole to receive a bolt of the pully.

(iii) *Other accessories:*

There are two side wings on each side. All the sides are covered with curtains. There are very simple and easy pully arrangements. There is one Chain Ridge for adjusting the pipes. Two Green Rooms on either side can also be made of pipes attached to the corner pillars of the stage and training a platform 7′ × 4′ of two wooden planks.

IV. SHRI SATYNEDRA NATH; GHUMAR, the most popular dance of Rajasthan is well known for its rich traditions of folk culture. It is equally rich in the variety and beauty of its folk dances. It consists of simple graceful movements and is performed on ceremonial occasions like Gangore, Holi, Diwali etc. The women stand in a circle and, bending forward, dance with a clap hand, bending forward and backward, move in a circle. Ghumar is also performed when a son is born, or in marriage. In eastern Rajasthan, and also in Mewar, men and women both dance together in a circle in religious fairs and festivals, especially in Mewar during the Holi festival, 'Ger' a form of Ghumar is also very common. Men, with sticks in hand, perform the 'Ger' which is a vigorous and forceful dance. They move in a circle on the beats of drum and 'Thali' making some rhythmic sounds. Songs are not sung during the performance of 'Ger'. Ger and Ghumar are the most fascinating dances of Rajasthan in which the old and the young take part.

PANIHARI is a famous folk song of Rajasthan. Its tune is really very melodious and attractive. In this song the strong devotion of a Rajasthani woman towards her husband has been depicted. Her "Dharana" cannot be moved by any kind of allurements. This song is the mirror of Rajasthani life and culture. "Panghat" occupies a very important part in the life of village women and the lady who brings water, is called the "Panihari". The story of this song is very romantic and the tune so fine that the snake charmers especially play this tune while catching some dangerous serpents. The story of the song goes like this: A woman, with

others goes to the well to fetch water. The weather is fine. It suddenly reminds her of her husband. In her conflict of emotions and ideas she becomes so much lost that she forgets to return home, and all her friends leave her alone. When she comes out from her world of thoughts she feels very sorry because no one is there to help her in putting the earthen pots on her head. She looks around and calls for help. A young man comes and asks her as to why, in spite of her being so beautiful, her face is full of sorrow and distress and she is also not properly dressed. He then praises her beauty and expresses his love for her, with a promise that if she accepts him as her husband, she will always lead a very happy life. At this she becomes furious and rebukes him. She straight away goes to her house, throws away the water pots and complains to her mother-in-law. She also adds that the culprit resembles her "Devar". Her mother-in-law only smiles and remarks that she is very innocent. Her husband had just returned and he had gone to the well to meet her and the person is no other than her husband.

V. SMT. SUJATA MITRA: I have often been asked, "What is the use of introducing subject like Arts in the rural areas, when there is acute economic crisis all over India. It is more important for the villagers, who do not even get two square meals, to sustain their life than to dabble in Arts". Such questions are put, out of an improper knowledge of our village life. For often, it is wrongly believed that art is for the well-to-do people and that when other wants of life are satisfied, then only one can think of art at leisure. But in the modern times this notion is no more valid. To make human environments more beautiful, more cheerful for everybody, is one of the primary object of every progressive society.

If we go deep into the tradition, culture and life of our village folk, we find that art is so much interwoven into the various patterns of their daily life that we cannot separate one from the other. The Community Development, being the all round development of an individual, cannot do without developing this side also. In the most interior tribal villages too, we find that art dominates their lives. The colours of their dresses, the delicacy of their ornaments and various other things which they use, or the everyday life they live prove their artistic urges. After seeing the beautiful textiles woven by the Assamese village women, Mahatma Gandhi once remarked that these women weave poems in the fabrics.

The Indian women's day dawns with a Rangoli on a clean angan or court-yard. Next item is to fetch water. The beautiful shape of the vessel, the colourful Dopatta, Choli and Ghagra have many times attracted the traveller. Their simple meals are cooked using utensils of various designs and shapes. While working in the fields, one may find them singing traditional songs, composed by them, or by their fore-fathers and rendered in their own sweet melodious tunes. In the afternoon, one may find the girls decorating the mud-walls of their huts with some floral designs or animal figures. In the evening, sitting around the dim lamp, a programme of Kirtan or Bhajan may come out spontaneously. It will be seen therefore, that arts are also a part of their lives, along with their struggle for day to day existence.

The question of introducing art in the villages does not arise, as it is already there. We can introduce modern sanitary methods and cleaner habits and develop the same according to the contemporary needs and tastes. Often it will be seen that the artistic sense is highly developed in the villages. As workers of the Community Development Project, it will be futile for us to try to introduce something which will have no meaning for their way of life. We can only help them to develop what they have got and create an understanding and appreciation of their products. One of the most important aspects of village life, the development, of Handicrafts, is also linked up. Arts and Crafts are inseparable. For various reasons, due to centuries of foreign domination, the advent of machine age, disintegration of the old ways of life, lack of patronage and inadequate marketing arrangements, influx of village artisans to the cities as labourers, due to lack of progress in production of handicrafts according to modern needs and tastes, our village arts and crafts decayed. Moreover, whatever the villagers produced, the artistic handicrafts, utensils, furniture, agricultural implements, or building their houses, were not done very consciously. They were producing these in the same tradition and methods as their fore-fathers did, without any conscious effort to adopt them to the changing times. On their own initiative, without any guidance from the technical experts, or from the State, they produced these articles. Our endeavours should be to infuse this consciousness in them, which is dormant, guide them according to the modern ways and create a taste among the people to appreciate their products, to buy and use them, which will ultimately benefit the village economically. In the cities we may proudly talk about our glorious traditions, which

in reality have been broken up. In the villages, however, our villagers are keeping up our proud traditions. But they are not conscious of it.

We should not confuse Art with drawing. Art is the exposition of finer sentiments in us. Rabindranath Tagore once said that a production becomes a craft when it fulfills the urge for creation—when it gives satisfaction to the man who produces, when there is something more than utility in it. Even for products of a mass-produced machine we prefer the one which is more beautiful. If we only cared for utility and functional values without caring much for the aesthetic and artistic side of it, for the gross economic developments of life, I feel it will be a negation of our way of life, tradition and culture. Already our tastes have been vulgarised to a great extent and we see ugliness all around us. If this decadence is allowed to go further, we will have nothing to hold our head high before other nations. Throughout the ages, our country has been well known for her standards. But it is pity that we allowed these village artisans and craftsmen to disintegrate without any proper support, training, adequate experiments and research. That is why Walter Gropious, one of the greatest architects of the present age said,

> "I have been actually aware of the chaotic ugliness of our modern man-made environments".

He warned that only through a change of educational aims can democracy develop a culture where beauty shall be again a basic requirement. A village woman stitches together a few torn Sarees or Dhoties to make 'Kantha', which is the only bedding she will have. She makes beautiful multicoloured designs with the thread taken out of the old Sarees. Why she takes her valuable time and energy to stitch a pattern of spontaneous design when she could have done without it? She enjoys the happiness of creation, and it also gives her recreation. Once in a small village near Allahabad, I remember, a young potter was working on his wheel to produce small earthen cups and *sorais*. At the end, he started drawing some floral designs on the wet pots with great care. On enquiry, I found that he would not get any more price for these pots, compared to the undesigned ones. All were sold at the same price of As. 3. each. On my asking him the reason for wasting his time on designing without any material gain, to my astonishment I got the reply that it would neither give him

satisfaction nor any fame as a potter, which he and his father had for years together. Their products were considered to be the most beautiful in that area. Others used to come and learn the art from his father and as such they must try to do their best. This same attitude and feeling towards their products was experienced by me in many other villages. This is the reason for our craftsmen and artisans to maintain a very high standard and skill in their work in whatever field it may be, and that is why their products were much appreciated. These are the people who built the exquisite monuments, pieces of architecture, rock-out temples and murals in ancient times.

It will be our endeavour to utilise these qualities of our villagers, not only for their economic development, but also for the country as a whole, culturally and aesthetically. This can be done in many ways. By giving them better tools and implements imparting them the modern technical knowledge, creating a market for their products, giving them training in arts and crafts, designs etc. coping with present day tastes and needs, create multi-purpose cooperative societies, so that they can sell their products and get the best return without the middle man or contractors, devouring a major share of their earnings. Mahilla Samities can function as selling agents for the articles produced by the village women which will supplement their income. They will thus be able to produce more and better goods, according to the demand of the consumers and also improve the designs. By imparting a basic knowledge of arts from childhood, we will be able to create good taste and consciousness.

We have to utilise all the educational institutions' for this purpose. In every primary, basic and secondary school, along with a really qualified Art and Crafts teacher, there should be a small museum, where the collections of our rural arts and crafts would be collected and exhibited in a better way. The parents, along with their children, will be benefited by the knowledge and will gradually develop an appreciation for arts and aesthetics.

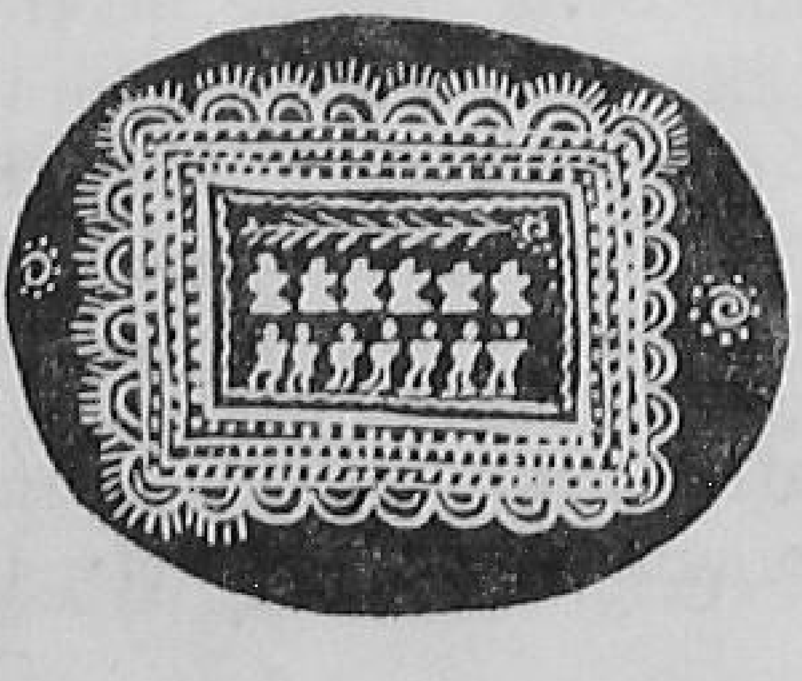
Periodically, exhibitions can be arranged, not only of the children's works but also of the adults from the nearabout villages. Parents seeing their own products in the exhibition will naturally take more interest. Their pride and self-confidence may be aroused.

The art and craft teacher of the primary and basic school shoud have better knowledge of local arts. Unfortunately, the art

teacher is paid very low, and not much respected. The trained artist from the art college therefore, does not like to come to the schools. As such, the standard of arts and crafts in the primary schools is very low. The art and craft teacher, with all his knowledge and experience, could teach the adults by having a separate class for them in the evenings. At the afternoons, women could be taught by a women teacher in the same school. In this way, the whole community becomes students and the student life has got some rare qualities which can bring the people together. The school thus becomes the living temple or the community centre for a modern village. The Ministry of Community Development can easily attach its workers and different centres with the schools, instead of having them separately. Thus the school can get more financial help too. The schools can bring the community with in its area on a common platform with the help of arts and crafts, and cultural or social activities organized in its premises. At the same time, schools can help the people to revive its aesthetic senses.

As for the craftsmen, most of them cling on to their old tools and do not welcome modern implements to improve their own work. If the schools introduce better and modern tools, the children learn the use of those thoroughly. Gradually the craftsmen are introduced to the better methods of working through their children.

The various handicrafts emporia in the cities sponsored by Central and different State Governments, have made available the products of the different parts of the country within the easy reach of the citizens, at a fairly reasonable price. In many cases, the prices in the cities may be high compared to the price the villagers get for their products. It should be our endeavour to increase the earnings of the village producers and thus raise their living standard to enable them to produce more articles of better qualities. This should be the ultimate object of training centres in arts and crafts in the Community Development Blocks.



teacher is paid very low, and not much respected. The trained artist from the art college therefore, does not like to come to the schools. As such, the standard of arts and crafts in the primary schools is very low. The art and craft teacher, with all his knowledge and experience, could teach the adults by having a separate class for them in the evenings. At the afternoons, women could be taught by a women teacher in the same school. In this way, the whole community becomes students and the student life has got some rare qualities which can bring the people together. The school thus becomes the living temple or the community centre for a modern village. The Ministry of Community Development can easily attach its workers and different centres with the schools, instead of having them separately. Thus the school can get more financial help too. The schools can bring the community with in its area on a common platform with the help of arts and crafts, and cultural or social activities organized in its premises. At the same time, schools can help the people to revive its aesthetic senses.

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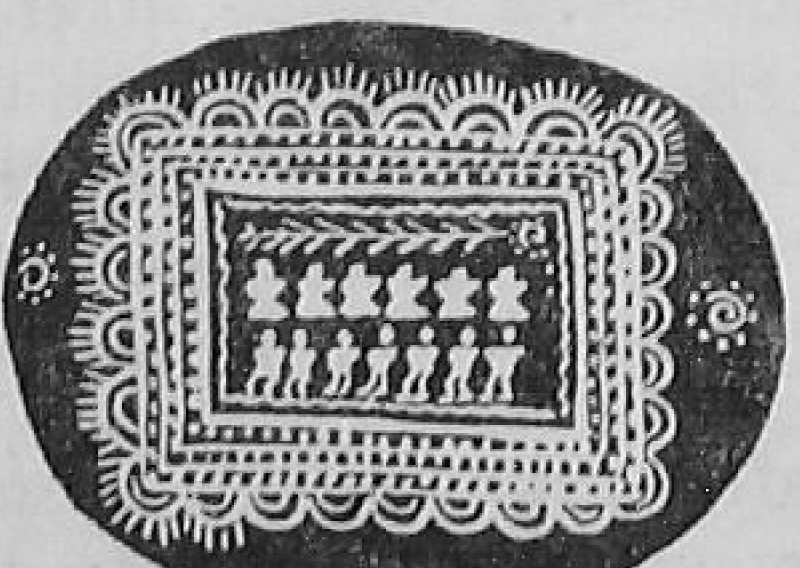

display their organising capacity and work in educational spirit, they are sure to achieve success in this field. He also suggested that the aesthetic aptitude tests should be conducted in Training Centres on some uniform basis, all over India.

The following points were also made during the discussion:—

1. The village teacher should be actively involved in various cultural programmes at village level, so that he may follow-up and maintain the programmes which are initiated by the Social Education Organisers.
2. The Social Education Organisers should select four or five villages near the block headquarters and start child art classes through village teachers after necessary training. If the Ministry agrees, one or two weeks training can be given to these teachers at the Training Centres.
3. The Social Education Organiser should primarily function as an educator and, as such, use art as a technique for the furtherance of our objectives. Local talents should be encouraged by means of exhibitions, etc. etc.
4. Selected folk art activities should be started in order to ensure success.
5. The syllabus committee should be formed to discuss and finalise the syllabus on arts and aesthetics for the art wing at the Training Centres.

A syllabus committee, to go into the question of holding aptitude tests on a uniform basis in all the centres, was constituted. It consisted of Shri U. C. Ghildyal (Chairman), Shri J. C. Kavoori* (Secretary), Shri A.N. Sehgal, Shri S.S. Dutta, Shri S.M. Dutta,** Smt. Sujata Mitra and Shri K.L. Sharma.***

Shri A. Prakash made the following five points:

1. Economic problems in rural life should be stressed and related to folk art
2. Villagers should be given a sense of pride and pleasure.
3. There should be a model village scheme and villages like Saidpur should become a model village for all.
4. The BDOs should be given some orientation and provided with specific funds for folk art.

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* Shri J.C. Kavoori is Deputy Director, SEOTC, Baroda.

** Shri S.S. Dutta is Art Instructor, SEOTC, Gandhigram.

*** Shri K.L. Sharma is SEO (Arts), Rajasthan, Jaipur.

5. The newly created Ministry for Culture may be requested to provide funds for this purpose to the blocks.

Shri G.S. Rawat* said that if the Cultural Ministry giving aid might dictate in the community work, it might become a state affair. Discussion brought out that this apprehension was unfounded.

Smt. Sujata Mitra speaking on 'Arts and Crafts among the Bhils near Udaipur' brought out that Rajasthan had been able to preserve Indian culture and art in its true and pure form. She suggested that if a survey is made by all the centres, something could really be achieved in this direction. Bhils were instinctively very colourful in their dresses, though, under circumstances they might not be so clean. But the clothing they used was produced and printed in regional designs in the nearby vicinities. The designs in most of the cases are similar to those found and practised in Kashmir and some other parts of the country. All this is done without any artist actually coming into the picture. In fact these are their traditional modes of expression. The Bhils are very fond of all folk arts. She also suggested that group studies in different approaches to the life was very helpful in understanding the social life. One thing very striking in her observations was that the local people had been very sympathetic and made the approach easier. An example of a eleven-year boy, a sort of ideal of the village and respected by all was found to be a talented artist. The people said that he was a creation of God himself. Shri Yasho Vimlanand** brought out a point that the old art was not being simply forgotten but was decaying of its own, as it could not cope with the present needs. Shri A. N. Sehgal remarked that the utilitarian point of view brings degeneration of art, because everything in art cannot be looked as a physical or material thing of utility. Masses have their tastes and their aesthetics. Shri S. M. Dutta pointed out that research on folk art should be taken up by all centres, but this was considered to be very ambitious scheme at the present time. A publication giving information on folk art with illustrations could be brought out.

Shri Satyendra Nath who read out his paper on 'Rural Stage', mentioned three particular dances prevalent in Rajasthan namely Ghumar, Gher and Panihari. Speaking on these, he suggested that 8 to 10 lectures on dance, drama and music should at least be arranged at every centre during the training of SEOs. A point

* Shri G.S. Rawat is Chief SEO, Himachal Pradesh, Simla.

** Shri Yasho Vimlanand is Senior Instructor, DOTC, Nilokheri.

was raised in between the discussion that SEOs in many cases were not at all aesthetic minded. It was, however, observed that they could not be completely blind to aesthetic tastes.

Shri J. C. Kavoori, observed that all trainees should add something and work towards folk arts. It does not signify that there should be some sort of regimentation but should provide a source of expression. Shri S.M. Dutta also suggested that due care should be taken while selecting SEOs, so that people without any art inclination may not be thrust in this profession. Shri G.S. Rawat said that music teachers should be provided in training centres to indicate the lines of music to all SEOs. Shri Ghildyal said that the village people were much imaginative than what we thought them to be. Drama, he said, was actually the most difficult art. The medium of dramatic expression was limited and not direct. As for the rural stage, he explained Rabindranath Tagore's experiment in stage craft and dramatics in Shantiniketan, namely that the stage should not be on raised ground, because it would increase the distance between the players and the audience. Rather there should be familiarity between the two. In the choice of curtains and the stage craft, there should be definite local colour and an improvisation with things easily found in villages like cots, etc. The urban material was not going to be of any better use in the village life. 'The villagers are to be made to realise that they can make out things of their own needs on such occasions'. Smt. Sujata Mitra elaborated this very point by giving first hand knowledge of dramatics in Shantiniketan, and in Bengal in general where there are circular stages — Yatras. 'This gives a more homely atmosphere for the audience and the actors and also provides better accommodation and harmony with audience seated all round instead of a one-side accommodation in the modern western stage. The colours and stage material used in Shantiniketan are produced from locally available materials'. A point was raised here that the stage at the Nilokheri Training Centre did not give an impression of what it ought to be, as it was a brick construction. Shri Ghildyal pointed out that it was out of certain necessities that the stage was constructed and it was not used only for dramatics but for multi-purposes. In time to come, it would be brought to look like an exactly rural stage. He praised the idea of Shri Sehgal for improvising the rural stage at Saidpur village and particularly the system of stage lights with the use of torches, giving absolutely a rural setting. He emphasised that very ordinary things of daily life given an artistic touch, looked really very beautiful.

## Proceedings of Syllabus Committee

1. Shri U. C. Ghildyal, Principal, DOTC, Nilokheri. — Chairman
2. Shri A. N. Sehgal, Art Consultant, Ministry of C.D.
3. Shri J. C. Kavoori, Deputy Director, SEOTC, Baroda.
4. Smt. Sujata Mitra, Art Instructor, Vidya Bhavan SEOTC, Udaipur (Rajasthan).
5. Shri S. M. Dutta, Art Instructor, SEOTC, Gandhigram.
6. Shri K.L. Sharma, SEO (Arts), Jaipur (Rajasthan).
7. Shri S. S. Dutta, Design Artist, SEOTC, Nilokheri.

The present syllabus of Social Education Organisers' Training, provision has been made for instructions being imparted on folk art under group 4, and on development of aesthetic sense and also on history of religion and culture of India under group 5. The committee considered the need for having a syllabus for imparting instructions on Art and Culture to Social Education Organisers while they underwent training.

The committee felt that there should be at least five lectures on Art and Cultural heritage, as detailed below.

| | *No. of lectures.* |
|---|---|
| (i) Pre-historic Art | 1 |
| (ii) Art from Mohenjedaro to Buddhist period | 1 |
| (iii) Golden period of Indian Art | 1 |
| (iv) Rajput and Moghal period in Indian Art | 1 |
| (v) Indian Art during the last century | 1 |

The committee decided that the syllabus should also include

the following details of topics under folk art and development of aesthetic sense:

| | No. of lectures. |
|---|---|
| Folk art and its salient features, as distinguished from classical and modern art. | 1 |
| Forms of Folk Art | |
| (i) Paintings and Murals | |
| (ii) Sculpture | |
| (iii) Designs: | |
| (a) Alpana | |
| (b) Rangoli | |
| (c) Hoi | |
| (iv) Wood Carving. | |

It was suggested that, as far as possible, decorative value of designs like 'Rangoli' and 'Alpana' should be demonstrated to the trainees while they are under training.

| | |
|---|---|
| Creative indigenous crafts | 1 |
| (i) Horn carving | |
| (ii) Ivory carving | |
| (iii) Marble carving | |
| (iv) Metal relief and engraving | |
| (v) Pith work | |
| (vi) Clay and papier mache toys | |
| Folk dances | 1 |
| Folk dramas | 1 |
| Folk music | 1 |

(The committee felt that impact of folk dances and dramas and music on community life may be studied and explained while imparting instructions of these topics, lectures may be supported, as far as possible, by arranging performances on regional dance).

Rural stage and open-air-theatre

The committee emphasised that, while improvising a rural stage, local resources and materials may be harnessd and utilised as much as possible.

| | |
|---|---|
| Puppetry | 1 |

The committee suggested that, as far as possible, demonstrations of existing modes of manipulating puppets *i.e.* shadow,

marionette and hand puppets may be arranged as a part of practical training to supplement theoretical experience).

*No. of lectures*

Child Art: 1

(The committee felt that the role and value of child art be emphasised, so as to educate our field workers in the subject. Demonstration of child art classes be organised to give practical experience to the trainees. For such classes, only locally available materials be utilised).

The Committee was of the opinion that it should be maintained as a regular feature to illustrate lectures by means of films, slides, photographs, actual specimens of arts and crafts available in the area and demonstrations and exhibitions. It was also suggested that practical demonstrations in use of various forms of folk arts should be arranged in the villages situated in the vicinity of the Social Education Organisers' Training Centre.

The committee considered the question of framing and administering certain aptitude tests in order to discover the talents and leanings of the Social Education Organisers who came for undergoing training. It was appreciated that some training centres had already devised some such tests and had found them useful in picking up certain trainees with specific aptitudes. These tests could serve a useful purpose only when they were administered immediately after the trainees arrived in order to impart training in arts without any loss of time. The procedure, suggested on the basis of experience gained by certain training centres, was as follows:—

(i) A questionnaire should be framed to ascertain the taste and aptitudes of the trainees.

(ii) A preliminary interview may be organised after the proforma of questions is filled up by the trainees, so that the details filled up by them could not be discussed.

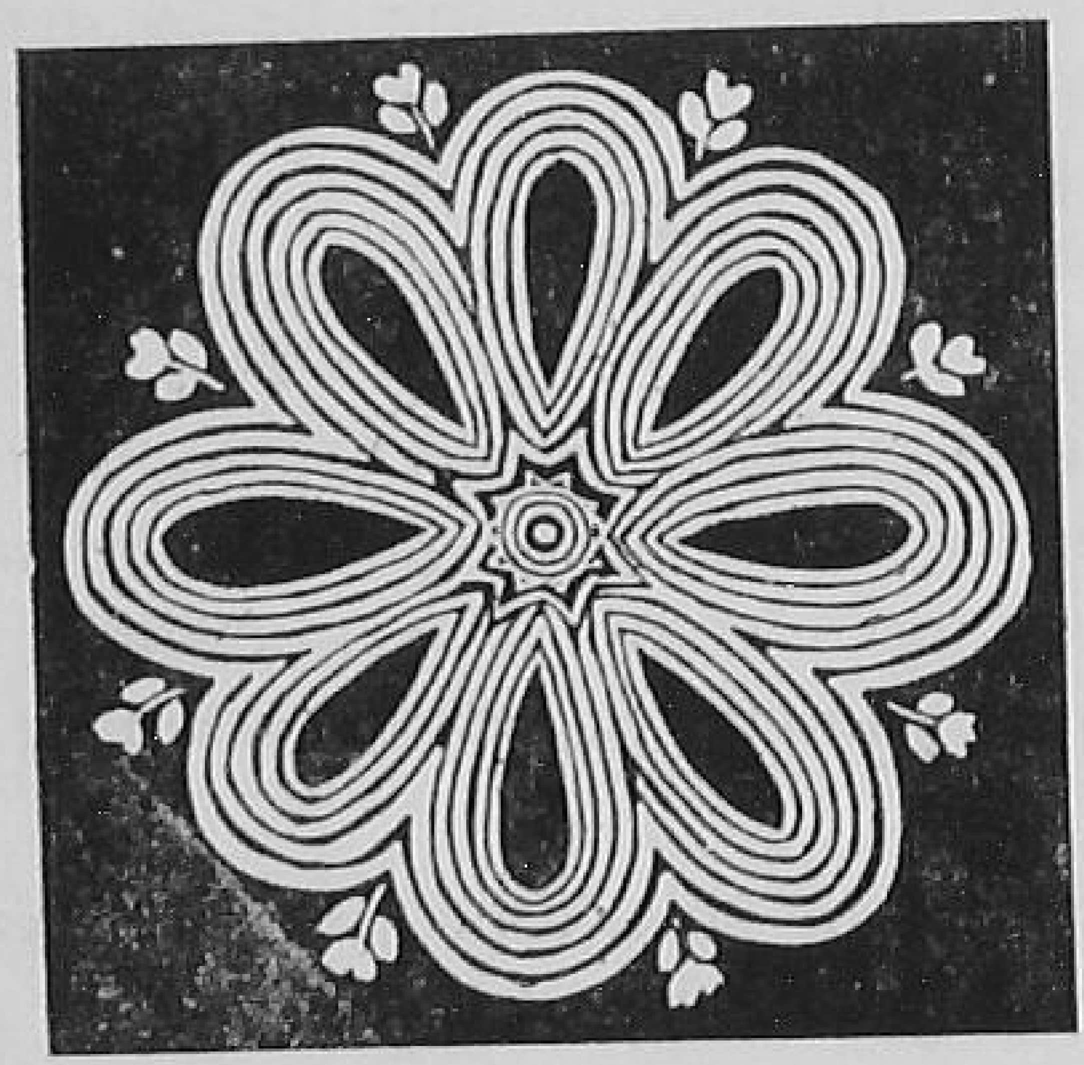
(iii) An opportunity for giving a performance of talents indicated by the trainees should be afforded to them.

(iv) A Board of observers could screen the trainees on the basis of performance and select them according to their talents.

(v) If the trainees could come and display their interests in certain forms of art and culture, they could be grouped

in homogeneous units according to their respective aptitudes and interests to go out and work in villages as a part of their practical work in revival of arts and culture.

(The general session approved the syllabus as framed by the Sub-committee).



## Participants of the Seminar

1. Shri U. C. Ghildyal,
   Principal, DOTC, Nilokheri.

2. Shri Surjan Singh Gill,
   Director, SEOTC, Nilokheri.

3. Shri A.N. Sehgal,
   Art Consultant,
   Ministry of Community Development,
   New Delhi.

4. Shri Sohan Singh,
   Assistant Educational Adviser,
   Ministry of Education, New Delhi.

5. Shri A.R. Deshpande,
   Director, National Fundamental
   Education Centre, New Delhi.

6. Shri J.C. Kavoori,
   Deputy Director, SEOTC, Baroda.

7. Shri Durga Shanker Shrimali,
   Asst. Director, Social Education,
   Govt. of Rajasthan, Jaipur.

8. Shri G.S. Rawat,
   Chief Social Education Organiser,
   Govt. of Himachal Pradesh, Simla.

9. Shri M.S. Bhatnagar,
   Asst. Social Education Officer,
   Social Education Board, Delhi State,
   Delhi.

10. Shri S.A. Kannaiah,
    Artist, SEOTC, Gandhigram.

11. Shri C.K. Vajpai,
    Artist, National Fundamental
    Education Centre, New Delhi.

12. Shri S.M. Dutta,
Instructor, SEOTC, Gandhigram.

13. Shri C. Roy,
Instructor, SEOTC, Belur Math.

14. Smt. Sujata Mitra,
Instructor, Vidya Bhavan SEOTC,
Udaipur.

15. Shri F.G. Kautali,
Instructor, Vidya Bhavan SEOTC,
Udaipur.

16. Shri K. Roy,
Art Instructor, Visva Bharati SEOTC,
Sriniketan.

17. Shri A.K. Thakur,
Art Instructor, SEOTC, Baroda.

18. Shri S.S. Dutta,
Design Artist, SEOTC, Nilokheri.

19. Shri S.P. Singh Verma,
Senior Art Instructor, SEOTC,
Allahabad.

20. Shri Ramesh Chandra,
Art Assistant, Ministry of
Community Development, New Delhi.

21. Shri Satyendranath,
Instructor, SEOTC (Vidya Bhavan),
Udaipur.

22. Shri Kanhya Lal Sharma,
Social Education Organiser (Arts),
Govt. of Rajasthan, Jaipur.

23. Shri Lal Chand,
Art Assistant, SEOTC, Nilokheri.

24. Smt. Daya Kumari,
LSEO, C.D. Block, Panipat (Pb.)

25. Km. R.D. Bhatnagar,
LSEO, N.E.S. Block, Hansi (Pb.)

26. Km. Raj Mohindra,
LSEO, Post Intensive Block, Bhatinda.

27. Km. Santosh Sud,
LSEO, Post Intensive Block, Nabha.

28. Km. Prem Chopra,
LSEO, N.E.S. Block, Nilokheri.

29. Km. Chandra Mani Malhotra,
LSEO, N.E.S. Block, Ladwa.

30. Km. Jagjit Kaur Sekhon,
LSEO, N.E.S. Block, Jagraon.

31. Smt. Ramesh Kumari Sharma,
LSEO, Jind (under training at Nilokheri).

32. Shri Yasho Vimlanand,
Senior Instructor, DOTC, Nilokheri.

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